

1 **PARENT/GUARDIAN AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT REGULATIONS**
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3 The Alexandria City School Board believes that the education of Alexandria’s young people is a
4 shared responsibility of families and schools. When families are involved in their children’s
5 education, the attitudes, behaviors, and achievement of students are positively enhanced.
6 Consequently, families are vital and necessary partners with the educational community
7 throughout their children’s school career. By recognizing the important role that they play, and
8 by assisting families to understand curricula and ways they can support children, students
9 benefit.

10
11 **I. DEFINITIONS**
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13 **“Parents/guardians and families”** include any caregivers/guardians who assume
14 responsibility for nurturing and caring for their child, and who interact with the child’s early
15 childhood program or school. This may include fathers, mothers, grandparents, foster parents,
16 formal and informal guardians, and siblings, among others.
17

18 **“Parent/guardian”** includes a parent or legal guardian or other person standing in loco
19 parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the student lives, or a person who is
20 legally responsible for the welfare of the student). Only parents/guardians may access their
21 student’s educational records.
22

23 **“Involvement”** includes family participation in school and out of school meetings and
24 program activities.
25

26 **“Engagement”** is a *shared responsibility* for schools, out of school programs and families. It
27 involves partnering with families to support student learning and success. It includes ongoing,
28 goal-directed relationships between staff and families that are mutual, culturally responsive,
29 and that support what is best for children and families, both individually and collectively.
30

31 **II. DIVISION-WIDE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROVISIONS**
32

33 **A. ACPS:**
34

- 35 1. Provides activities that will educate and connect parents/guardians and families to
36 learning opportunities to support their children’s academic and social-emotional
37 development. These activities will promote cooperation between the Division and
38 other agencies or school/community groups and disseminate information regarding
39 parenting skills and child/adolescent development;
40
- 41 2. Implements strategies to involve parents/guardians and families in the educational
42 process, including:
43 a) Informing families about opportunities for involvement and encouraging
44 participation in programs;
45 b) Providing access to educational resources for parents/guardians and families
46 to use with their children; and

- 47 c) Keeping parents/guardians informed of the objectives of the Division’s
48 educational programs as well as of their child’s participation and progress
49 with these programs;
50
- 51 3. Enables families to participate in the education of their children through a variety of
52 roles. For example, family members are encouraged to:
53 a) Provide input into Division policies and plans; and
54 b) Volunteer time within the classroom and school programs.
55
- 56 4. Provides professional development opportunities for new hires during their first year
57 and continued learning opportunities for all staff to enhance their understanding and
58 ability to implement effective family engagement strategies.
59
- 60 5. Performs regular evaluations of parent/guardian and family engagement at each
61 school and at the Division level;
62
- 63 6. Provides access, upon request, to any instructional material used as part of the
64 educational curriculum;
65
- 66 7. Ensures meaningful communication with limited English proficient (LEP)
67 parents/guardians in a language they can understand. In addition, for
68 parents/guardians of students eligible for English Learner programs, ACPS informs
69 them of how they can be active participants in assisting their children
70 a) To learn English;
71 b) To achieve at high levels in core academic subjects; and
72 c) To meet the same challenging academic content and student academic
73 achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.
74
- 75 8. Provides supplementary aides and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act
76 (ADA) when needed to communicate effectively with parents/guardians who have
77 communication disabilities. Such services will be provided unless doing so would
78 result in an undue burden to ACPS. **Staff will submit requests using the online
79 system (<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/translation>) following Division procedures.**
80

81 **B. Family and School Partnerships**

82
83 To enhance family-school partnerships, the following essential elements shall be promoted
84 to support and align with the ACPS strategic plan:
85

- 86 1. Welcoming all Parents/Guardians and Families
87 a) Schools shall promote an atmosphere where all parents/guardians and families
88 feel welcomed, valued and connected to the school community.
89 b) Parents/guardians shall have the opportunity to meet their children’s teachers,
90 tour the school building and meet other parents/guardians during open houses
91 held annually at each school building.

- 92 c) Welcome packets shall be provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of
93 the school year and upon enrollment. Packets shall include important school
94 information, including Division contact information, language access
95 information and Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center
96 information.
97 d) Schools shall strive to eliminate barriers to family engagement by arranging
98 school meetings at a variety of times, such as in the morning or evening, and
99 by providing child care, transportation, and interpretation services at family
100 engagement events when possible.

101
102 2. Communicating Effectively

- 103 a) School staff shall engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication
104 with parents/guardians in regard to student learning.
105 b) To communicate effectively, school staff will be respectful of and address
106 issues such as cultural diversity, language differences and special needs.
107 c) Appropriate steps shall be taken to allow authentic communication between
108 participants, which includes communications with:
109
 - Parents/guardians with communication disabilities; and
 - Limited English proficient (LEP) parents/guardians, whether oral
110 or in writing, in a language the parent/guardian can understand.
111 d) ACPS has developed and implemented a process for determining LEP
112 parents'/guardians' preferred language of communication. The school
113 division shall adequately notify LEP parents in a language they can
114 understand, and provide meaningful access to the same information about
115 schools, programs, services or activities as non-LEP parents/guardians.
116 e) Spontaneous oral interpretation for LEP parents/guardians and family
117 members is often provided by bilingual ACPS staff members, including parent
118 liaisons. However, all essential information provided by the Division and
119 schools, including written translation and oral interpretation at official
120 meetings (i.e., parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, disciplinary
121 hearings, etc.), shall be provided by certified staff, or vendors contracted to
122 provide such services, except in cases where the safety of a child is in
123 jeopardy. **Translation and interpretation services provided to**
124 **parents/guardians and family members must be requested by ACPS staff**
125 **using the online system (<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/translation>)**
126 **following Division procedures.**
127

128
129 3. Supporting Student Success

- 130 a) Schools shall provide opportunities for parents/guardians and families to learn
131 effective ways to support their child's educational needs, including
132 information about how to support learning at home, promoting effective study
133 habits, and monitoring their child's progress through student achievement
134 data.
135 b) Schools shall collaborate with the ACPS Family and Community Engagement
136 (FACE) Center to ensure family engagement activities and materials are
137 aligned with best practices identified by the U.S. Department of Education.

138 c) Schools shall assist families in understanding expectations regarding transition
139 points in their child’s educational progression, including entering preschool or
140 kindergarten, and moving from elementary to middle or from middle to high
141 school.

142
143 4. Speaking up for Every Child
144 a) Parents/guardians and families shall be empowered to advocate for their
145 children and the children of other families to ensure that all students are
146 treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that support
147 achievement.

148
149 5. Sharing Responsibility
150 a) Schools shall promote an equal partnership with parents/guardians and
151 families in making decisions that affect their children.
152 b) Schools and the Division shall make efforts to recruit and support
153 participation by parents/guardians and families representing all student groups
154 on advisory committees and in school organizations that influence school
155 policies, practices and programs.
156 c) The role of parents/guardians and families in decision-making shall be
157 continually evaluated and refined at the Division and school levels.
158 d) Schools shall offer a range of meaningful opportunities for parents/guardians
159 and families to volunteer within schools.

160
161 6. Collaborating with the Community
162 a) Schools shall collaborate with health and human services agencies to provide
163 access and coordinate support services for students, parents/guardians and
164 families.
165 b) Schools shall provide parents/guardians, families and students with
166 community resources and opportunities that link to learning, skills and talents,
167 including out-of-school time, enrichment, mentoring, internships and summer
168 programs for students.
169 c) Community partners shall be invited to share resources with schools through
170 the Office of School, Business and Community Partnerships.

171
172 **C. Review and Reporting**

173
174 The School Board will receive data related to student success and family engagement as
175 part of the annual Strategic Plan Goal 5 Performance Update. The Department of School
176 and Community Relations will monitor this regulation and implement aligned family
177 engagement initiatives. Data regarding such initiatives and their outcomes will be made
178 available to the School Board annually as part of the department plan reporting process.

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181 **III. PARENT/GUARDIAN AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN TITLE I SCHOOLS**

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183 **A. Parent/Guardian and Family Involvement in Division Plan: Title I, Part A of the**

184 **Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 6318)**
 185

186 ACPS encourages parents/guardians and families of children who are eligible to
 187 participate in Title I, Part A programs to jointly develop the Division's Title I plan
 188 with ACPS staff under 20 U.S.C. § 6312. They may provide their input by
 189 participating in their school's Title I school leadership or school improvement team, or
 190 Title I Family Advisory Committee; through attending their school's Annual Title I
 191 Meeting; or by responding to Title I surveys and/or contacting the Division's Title I
 192 Office directly.
 193

194 **B. Parent/Guardian and Family Involvement in School Review and Improvement:**
 195 **Title I, Part A**
 196

197 ACPS encourages parents/guardians and families of children who are eligible to
 198 participate in Title I, Part A, and English Learner programs to participate in the
 199 process of school review and, if applicable, to jointly develop school support and
 200 improvement plans under 20 U.S.C. § 6311 (d). They may do so in multiple ways:
 201 including: attending parent meetings where input on these plans is solicited, by serving
 202 on parent and family advisory teams, or by sending their comments to those teams
 203 and/or school administrators.
 204

205 **C. Division Responsibilities: Title I, Part A**
 206

- 207 1. ACPS, and each school that receives Title I, Part A, funds:
- 208 a) Involves parents/guardians and families of children served by ACPS in the
 209 activities of its schools;
 - 210 b) Implements an effective means of outreach to parents/guardians and families
 211 of English Learners, in a language the parents/guardians and families can
 212 understand, to inform them how they can:
 - 213 • be involved in the education of their children;
 - 214 • be active participants in assisting their children to attain English
 215 proficiency;
 - 216 • achieve at high levels within a well-rounded education; and
 - 217 • meet the challenging State academic standards expected of all
 218 students;
 - 219 c) Provides materials and training to help parents/guardians and families work
 220 with their children to improve their academic achievement, such as literacy
 221 training and using technology (including education about the harms of
 222 copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parent/guardian and family
 223 engagement;
 - 224 d) Provides the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to
 225 assist and build the capacity of each participating school in planning and
 226 implementing effective parent/guardian and family involvement activities to
 227 improve student academic achievement and school performance. This may
 228 include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and

- 229 philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively
 230 engaging parents and family members in education;
- 231 e) Educates teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals,
 232 other school leaders and staff, with the assistance of parents/guardians and
 233 families, in the value and utility of families’ contributions and how to reach
 234 out to, communicate with, and work with them as equal partners, how to
 235 implement and coordinate parent/guardian and family programs, and how to
 236 build ties between families and the school;
- 237 f) To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinates and integrates
 238 parent/guardian and family engagement strategies with other federal, state and
 239 local laws and programs, including public preschool, and conducts other
 240 activities, such as Parent Resource Centers, that encourage and support full
 241 participation in the education of their children;
- 242 g) Ensures that information related to school and family programs, meetings, and
 243 other activities is sent to the parents/guardians of participating students in a
 244 format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents/guardians can
 245 understand; and
- 246 h) Provides such other reasonable support for parent/guardian and family
 247 involvement activities as may be requested.
- 248
- 249 2. ACPS, and each of its schools that receives Title I, Part A, funds, **MAY**:
- 250 a) Involve parents/guardians and families in the development of training for
 251 teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such
 252 training;
- 253 b) Provide necessary literacy training from Title I funds if the Division has
 254 exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training;
- 255 c) Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parent/guardian
 256 and family involvement activities, including transportation and child care
 257 costs, to enable parents/guardians and families to participate in school-related
 258 meetings and training sessions;
- 259 d) Train parents/guardians and families to enhance the involvement of other
 260 parents/guardians and families;
- 261 e) Arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct (in-home)
 262 conferences between teachers (and/or other educators who work directly with
 263 participating children) and their parents/guardians who are unable to attend
 264 such conferences at school, in order to maximize their involvement and
 265 participation;
- 266 f) Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parent/guardian and
 267 family involvement;
- 268 g) Establish a Division-wide Title I Family Advisory Committee, comprised of a
 269 sufficient number and representative group of parents/guardians or family
 270 members of children who are eligible to participate in Title I, Part A, and
 271 English Learner programs, to adequately represent the needs of the
 272 population. Such an advisory committee would provide advice on all matters
 273 related to parent/guardian and family involvement in programs supported by
 274 Title I and would help review and revise Policy IGBC and this regulation;

275 and,
276 h) Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses
277 in parent/guardian and family involvement activities.
278

279 **D. School Responsibilities for Parent/Guardian and Family Engagement:**
280 **Title I, Part A**

281
282 Each school served under Title I, Part A, jointly develops with, agrees on and
283 distributes to parents/guardians and family members of participating children a
284 written, school-based policy that describes the means for carrying out the following:
285

- 286 1. Convening an annual meeting at a convenient time, to which all parents/guardians and
287 families of participating children are invited and encouraged to attend, to inform them
288 of their school’s participation in Title I, Part A and to explain the law’s requirements,
289 and of their right to be involved;
290
- 291 2. Offering flexible meeting schedules such as meetings in the morning or evening, and
292 if needed, schools may provide, with funds provided under this part, transportation,
293 child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement;
294
- 295 3. Involving parents/guardians and families in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in
296 the planning, review, and improvement of Title I, Part A, programs, including the
297 planning, review, and improvement of the school-based policy for parent/guardian
298 and family engagement and the joint development of the school-wide program plan
299 under 20 U.S.C. § 6314(b), except that if a school has a process in place for
300 involving parents/guardians and families in the joint planning and design of the
301 school’s programs, the school may use that process, if such process includes an
302 adequate representation of parents/guardians and families of participating children;
303
- 304 4. Providing parents/guardians and families of participating children
305 a) timely information about Title I, Part A, programs;
306 b) a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms
307 of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the
308 achievement levels of the challenging state academic standards; and
309 c) if requested by parents/guardians and families, opportunities for regular
310 meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in
311 decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such
312 suggestions as soon as practicably possible; and
313
- 314 5. If the school-wide program plan under 20 U.S.C. § 6314(b) is not satisfactory to the
315 parents/guardians and families of participating children, submitting their comments
316 on the plan when the school makes it available to the School Board.
317

318 **E. Parent/Guardian and Family Involvement in Allocation of Funding: Title I, Part A**
319

320 Parents/guardians and family members of children receiving services under Title I,

321 Part A, are involved in the decisions regarding how funds provided under that law are
322 allotted for parental involvement activities.

323
324 ACPS will involve parents/guardians and families of children served in Title I schools
325 in decisions about how the one percent of Title I, Part A, funds reserved for parental
326 involvement is spent, and will ensure, as required by law, that not less than 90 percent
327 of the one percent reserved goes directly to the school.

328
329 **F. Policy/Regulatory Review: Title I, Part A Provisions**

330
331 ACPS conducts, with the meaningful involvement of parents/guardians and family
332 members of children who are eligible to participate in Title I, Part A programs, an
333 annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Title I provisions of Policy
334 IGBC as outlined in this regulation, in improving the academic quality of all schools
335 served under Title 1, Part A, including identifying:

- 336 1. Barriers to greater participation by parents/guardians and families in activities
337 authorized by Title I, Part A (with particular attention to those who are
338 economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, have limited English proficiency,
339 have limited literacy or are of any racial or ethnic minority background);
340
- 341 2. The needs of parents/guardians and family members to assist with the learning of
342 their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers; and
343
- 344 3. Strategies to support successful school and family interactions.
345

346 ACPS uses the findings of its annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for
347 more effective parent/guardian and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, the
348 Title I provisions of Policy IGBC and this regulation.

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351 Established: June 7, 2018
352 Revised: February 18, 2021

353
354 Legal Refs.: 20 U.S.C. §§ 6311, 6314, 6318.
355 42 U.S.C. § 2000(d).
356 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12134.
357 30 C.F.R. Part 100.

358
359 Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78.

360		
361	Cross Refs.:	AD Educational Philosophy
362		BCF Advisory Committees to the School Board
363		IAA Notification of Learning Objectives
364		IGBC Parent/Guardian and Family Engagement
365		IICB/IICC Community Resource Persons/School Volunteers

366		
367	IKA	Parental Assistance with Instruction
368	IKA-R	Regulations for Parental Involvement with Student Learning
369	IKCA	Reports to Parents/Guardians
370	KA	Goals for School-Community-Parent Relations
371	KB	Public Information Program
372	KK	School Visitors
373	KMA	Relations with Parent Organizations as Partners
374	KP	Parental Rights and Responsibilities